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ABSTRACT

Asserting that no campus, from those located in large urban settings to institutions nestled in small rural environments, is immune to being a potential target of domestic or international terrorism, this publication offers information and resources beneficial to presidents, chancellors, and their leadership teams as they review both prevention and deterrence measures in their efforts to enhance campus security. It addresses campus vulnerabilities and security preparedness, and offers specific suggestions for security planning. The guide concludes with a list of security-related resources. (EV)

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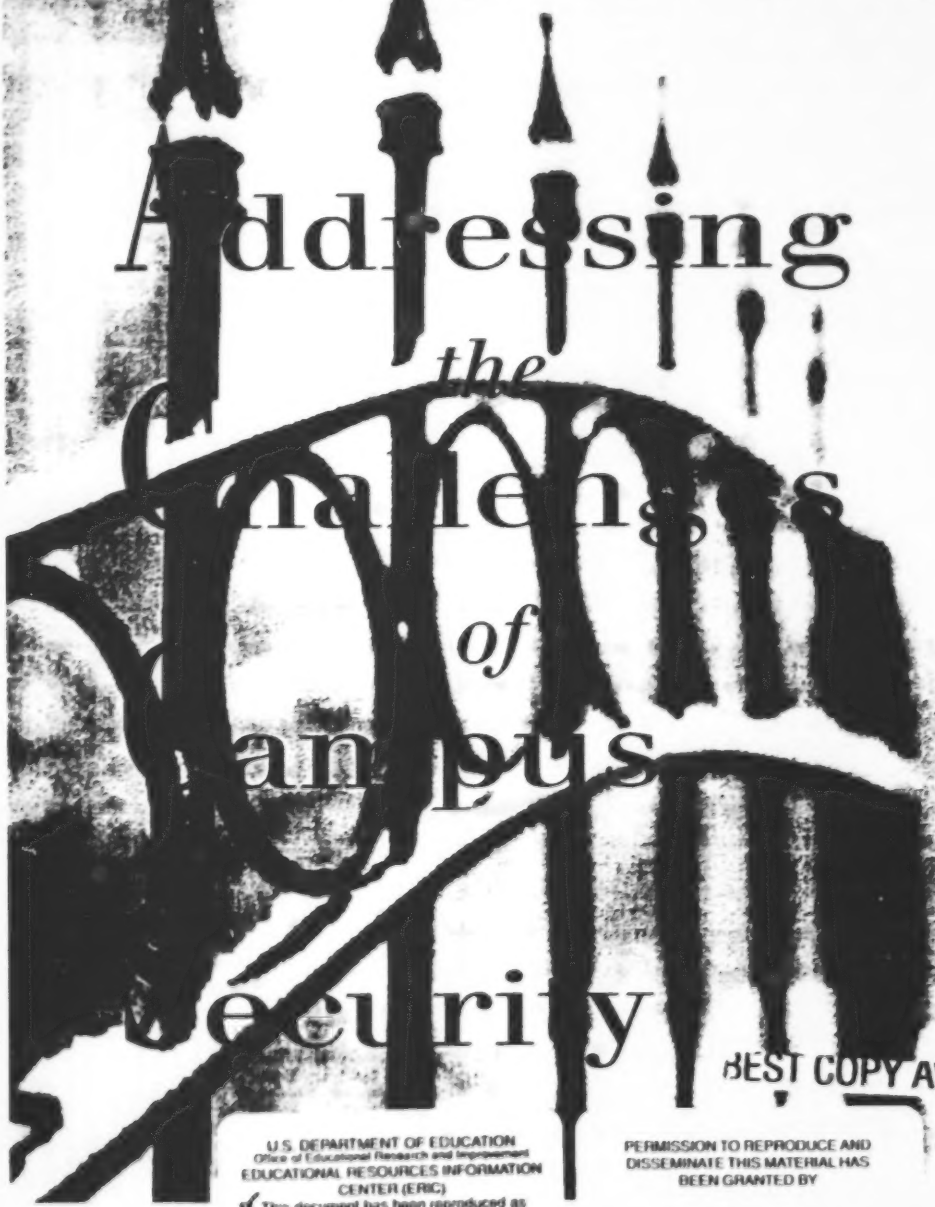
Addressing the Challenges of Campus Security



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CAMPUS SECURITY

September 11 has markedly altered how America's colleges and universities need to approach campus security. No campus, from those located in large urban settings to institutions nestled in small rural environments, is immune to being a potential target of domestic or international terrorism. This publication is intended to provide information and resources beneficial to presidents, chancellors and their leadership teams as they review both prevention and deterrence measures in their efforts to enhance campus security.

AASCU wishes to acknowledge the contribution of W. Roger Webb, president of the University of Central Oklahoma and former commissioner of Public Safety for the State of Oklahoma, who represented AASCU at a conference hosted by the U.S. Department of Justice and the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administration, and subsequently prepared a report for AASCU. Additional information for this publication comes from the U.S. Office for Domestic Preparedness and the recent Higher Education Summit on Homeland Security.

Campus Vulnerabilities

College and university campuses are essentially open environments; to many they are compelling symbols of democracy. This lack of environmental restraint and American symbolism make institutions of higher education valued targets. Campuses are easily accessible and convenient places for terrorists to hide because they can blend in with students in residence halls, student unions and libraries. President Webb suggests that, "Many campuses live with a sense of invincibility. The academic mindset often assumes some sort of moral protective barrier around our campuses."

Consider these possibilities:

Six individuals from a secret militia group based in a north central state steal radioactive waste material from a Canadian nuclear reactor and build a "dirty bomb." They deposit the bomb in a trash receptacle in a large sports arena during a championship basketball game. The initial explosion destroys a section of the arena killing and seriously injuring more than 100 people.

An "international student" food service employee, sympathetic to forces opposed to American involvement in the Middle East, obtains a supply of a toxic substance called ricin, a poisonous substance extracted from a castor bean plant, and laces the food of several hundred students. Within hours students report symptoms of abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhea. Later they suffer severe dehydration and a decrease in blood pressure and, before doctors can diagnose the toxin, several students die and many become severely ill.

At one time these scenarios would have seemed unthinkable. Now they are just two examples of the many vulnerabilities facing colleges and universities.

Structures are another prime target for terrorists. Campuses feature large capacity arenas and stadiums that are vulnerable to outdoor threats, performance centers and other venues that attract large crowds

who are not easily scrutinized, high rise buildings like residence halls and office buildings that may have parking garages under them. Some institutions house chemical and biological, medical, and animal research laboratories that accommodate toxic and hazardous agents. All campuses have tempting targets such as power plants and heating and cooling terminals, and elaborate information technology systems that are easily accessible and vulnerable.

Colleges and universities need to understand the significance of placing increased importance on addressing security issues created by their environment and their setting.

Security Preparedness

Training and developing partnerships are two areas in which institutional presidents and chancellors should play a direct role in campus security. In his report, President Webb offered the following: "As presidents, we must provide the necessary resources and insist that the men and women who protect our students and faculty be trained and prepared to recognize potentially dangerous situations on and around our campuses. University police need to be better trained so that they can recognize the vulnerable spots for potential targets. Good police work demands that campus officers have a heightened sensitivity to suspicious activities of students and visitors. Just like state and city police, campus officers must be aware of known terrorists and individuals listed on national criminal files."

Partnerships are essential. Colleges and universities need to establish close ties with local, state and federal agencies including the agent in charge of the nearest FBI field office and the regional Joint Terrorism

Task Force. Presidents and chancellors should invite local, state and federal law enforcement officers to campus to help them become familiar with the institution, its leadership, and the complexity of its operations. And institutions should become involved in regional "Homeland Security" planning.

Other institutional considerations include the following suggestions synthesized from the resources noted in the introduction.

Establish a management team responsible for directing the implementation of a campus emergency operations plan.

Develop a unified command plan with local governmental and law-enforcement agencies.

Establish "threat-assessment teams" and develop checklists for each level of threat identified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Update risk assessment inventory.

Consider assigning campus security officers as liaisons with international student groups. The officers may serve to build trust and allay fears among international students.

Campuses should also:

Increase physical checks of critical facilities during periods of increased alert.

Establish a single point of access for each critical facility and institute 100 percent identification checks.

CAMPUS SECURITY

Increase administrative inspections of persons and their possessions entering critical facilities.

Assess adequacy of video monitoring.

Assess adequacy of physical barriers outside sensitive buildings and proximity of parking.

Ensure adequacy of emergency alert and communication system for students, faculty, staff and visitors.

Review institutional crisis communications plan including parent and stakeholder communications.

This checklist is not intended to be all-inclusive; it is proposed as a starting point for presidents and chancellors who understand that campus security is no longer routine.

Resources

The following may be helpful in looking at connections for partnerships, training, funding and other resource enhancements.

- International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA) • **iaclea.org**
- International Association of Chiefs of Police, the College and University Policing Section • **iacp.org**
- Federal Bureau of Investigation • **fbi.gov**
- Department of Homeland Security • **dhs.gov**
- Office of Domestic Preparedness, state and local support • **ojp.usdoj.gov/odp**

Examples of AASCU institutions with emergency preparedness plans that may serve as useful models include:

- Ball State University, Indiana
- Bowling Green State University, Ohio
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- San Diego State University, California
- San Francisco State University, California
- University of Central Oklahoma
- University of Nevada Reno
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- Valdosta State University, Georgia

For additional information regarding any of the resources listed in this publication, contact AASCU's Division of Communications, 202.293.7070.

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) is comprised of more than 430 public colleges, universities and systems of public higher education throughout the United States and its territories.

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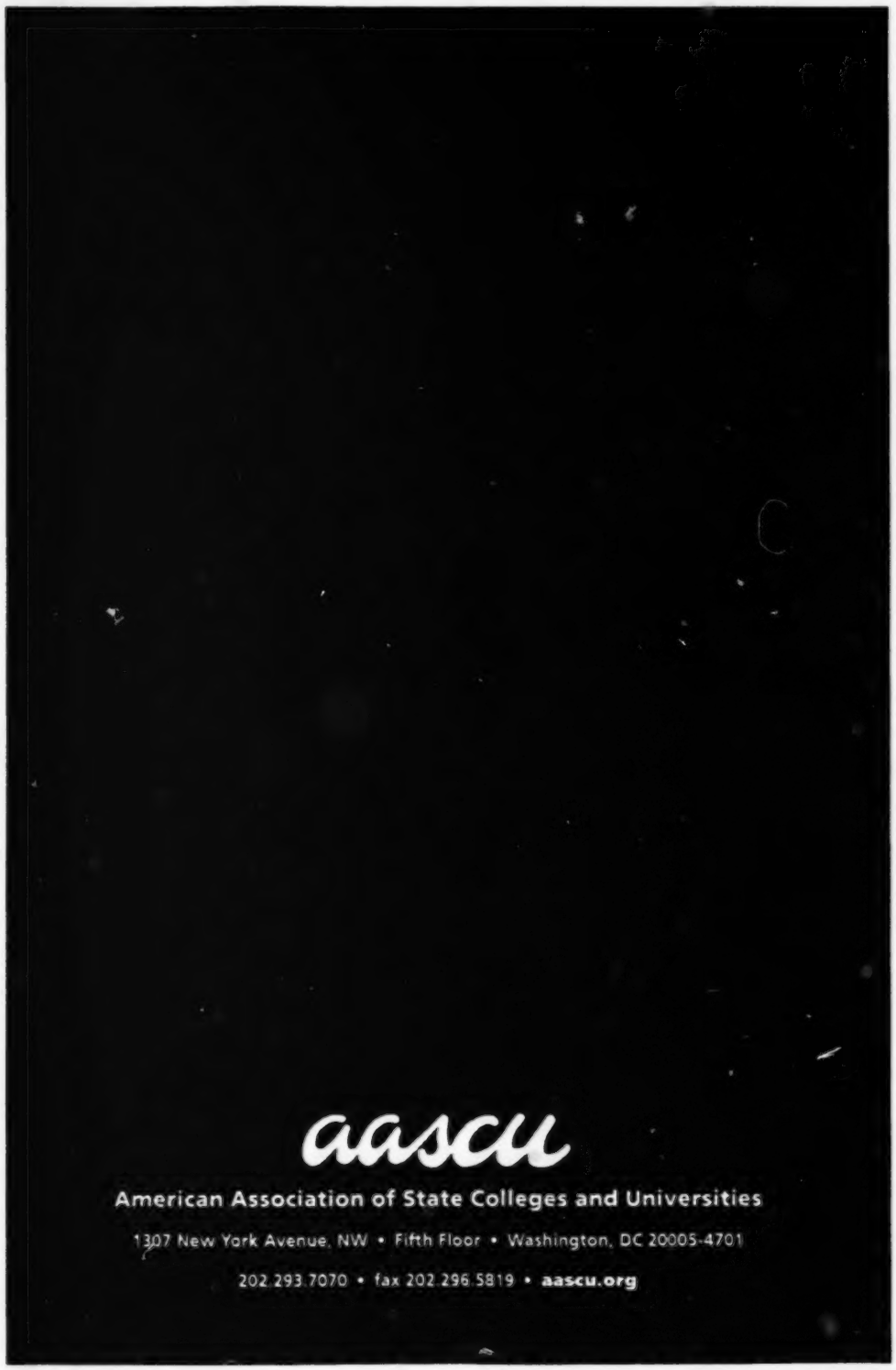
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